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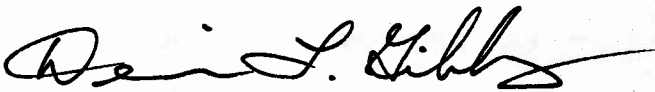
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May 5, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrators, Freestanding Medical Detoxification Facilities that Treat Individuals for Psychoactive Substance Abuse or Dependence

FROM: Dennis L. Gibbs, Director
Division of Health Licensing 

SUBJECT: Provider-Wide Exception – Emergency Medication Kit

Section 3101.B. of Regulation 61-93, Standards for Licensing Facilities That Treat Individuals for Psychoactive Substance Abuse or Dependence, pertaining to treatment and services provided by freestanding medical detoxification facilities states that these facilities shall provide, "Continuing observation of each client's condition to recognize and evaluate significant signs and symptoms of medical distress and take appropriate action..."

Due to the condition of clients that may require immediate medical attention, it may be appropriate for a facility to have readily available an emergency medication kit or cart containing controlled substances associated with addressing medical distress and withdrawal symptoms.

Therefore, in the interest of establishing reasonable standards that can be met by providers and yet do not compromise the health and well-being of the clients of freestanding medical detoxification facilities that treat individuals for psychoactive substance abuse or dependence, it has been determined that alternative standards will be considered as acceptable.

All freestanding medical detoxification facilities that treat individuals for psychoactive substance abuse or dependence will be required to meet the standard outlined in the licensing standards, *i.e.*, R61-93, Section 3101.B., that require these facilities to observe each client's condition to recognize and evaluate significant signs and symptoms of medical distress and take appropriate action, or, as an alternative:

Facilities shall provide continuing observation of each client's condition to recognize and evaluate significant signs and symptoms of medical distress and take appropriate action. This shall include the use of an emergency medication kit or cart as appropriate provided the following conditions are met:

- 1. Each facility shall have a nondispensing drug outlet permit issued by the SC Board of Pharmacy;*
- 2. Each facility shall maintain, upon the advice and written approval of the Department's Bureau of Drug Control, the facility's Medical Director, and consultant pharmacist, an emergency medication kit or cart containing controlled substances that address medical distress and withdrawal symptoms at each client care station for the use of physicians or other legally authorized healthcare providers in treating the emergency needs of clients.*

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3. The emergency medication kit or cart shall be sealed and stored in a secured area in such a manner as to prevent unauthorized access and to ensure a proper environment for preservation of the medications within, but in such a manner as to allow immediate access.

4. Whenever the emergency medication kit or cart is opened, the use of contents shall be documented by the facility staff and it shall be restocked and resealed by a pharmacist within 48 or the end of the next business day, whichever is longer.

5. Medications used from the emergency medication kit or cart shall be replaced according to facility policy.

6. The contents of the emergency medication kit or cart shall be listed and maintained on the exterior of the emergency medication kit or cart, and shall correspond to the list. A copy of the inventory list shall be maintained at the client care station for quick reference.

7. The facility may determine that one emergency medication kit can be readily accessible to, and adequately meet the needs of two or more client care stations. If such is the case, the facility's written policies shall include the location(s) of the emergency medication kit(s) and the justification for this determination. There shall not be less than one emergency medication kit on each client floor.

8. At least monthly the licensed nurse shall examine the emergency medication kit(s) and controlled medication records and certify to the administrator that this inventory is correct.

This exception applies to any freestanding medical detoxification psychoactive substance abuse or dependence facility licensed by the Department. It relates solely to SC licensing standards. Any adverse condition(s) that may be related to this exception may result in revocation of the exception by the Department.

If there are any questions regarding the above, please call Randy Clark at (803) 545-4370.

DLG/rel

cc: Leon Frishman
Randy Clark
Wilbur Harling

Stephen Lee Dutton, DAODAS